



THE
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By Mr. T O W N,

CRITIC and CENSOR-GENERAL.

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Non umbræ altorum nemorum, non mollia possunt

Prata movere animum. — — — VIRG.



THE ladies of the present age are strangely altered from the unpolished females who flourished in the days of Romance. What modern *Parthenissa* would not prefer a tall young fellow to the most beautiful dwarf in the universe, or a coach and six to a white palfry? The fair damsels of old were chiefly to be found in woods and forests; but our present heroines are distinguished by an utter aversion to the country, and would as soon be confin'd by a giant in an enchanted castle, as immured with old maiden aunts in the family mansion house. Nothing is more dreadful to our ladies of quality than the approach of summer: for what woman of spirit would chuse to leave the

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town to wander in solitudes and deserts; or what pleasure can the long days give to our fine ladies, when the pretty creatures are conscious that they look best by candlelight? The general complaint against the country is want of amusement, or want of company: but these common inconveniences are trifles in comparison to the sufferings of the poor lady who writes the following letter, which was communicated to me with leave to make it public.

Dear Lady CHARLOTTE,

I HAVE been plagued, pestered, teized to death, and hurried out of my wits, ever since I have been in this odious country. O my dear, how I long to be in town again! *Pope* and the poets may talk what they will of their purling streams, shady groves, and flowery meads: but I had rather live all my days among the cheesemongers shops in *Thames Street*, than pass such another spring in this filthy country. Would you believe it? I have scarce touched a card since I have been here; and then there has been such ado with us about election matters, that I am ready to die with the vapours: such a rout with their hissing and hollowing, my head is ready to split into a thousand pieces! If my Sir *John* must be in parliament, why cannot he do as your lord does, and be content with a borough, where he might come in without all this trouble; and take his seat in the house, though he has never been within a hundred miles of the place.

OUR house, my dear, has been a perfect inn, ever since we came down; and I have been obliged to trudge about as much as a fat landlady. Our doors are open to every dirty fellow in the county that is worth forty shillings; all my best floors are spoiled by the hobnails of farmers stumping about them; every room is a pigstye, and the *Chinese* paper in

in the drawing-room stinks so abominably of punch and tobacco, that it would strike you down to come into it. If you knew what I have suffered, you would think I had the constitution of a chairman to go through it. We never sit down to table without a dozen or more of boisterous two-legged creatures as rude as bears; and I have nothing to do but to heap up their plates, and drink to each of their healths: what is worse than all, one of the beasts got tipsy, and nothing would serve him but he must kiss me, which I was obliged to submit to for fear of losing his vote and interest. Would you think it, dear *Charlotte*?—do not laugh at me—I stood godmother in person to a huge lubberly boy at a country farmer's, and they almost poisoned me with their hodgepodge they called caudle, made of sour ale and brown sugar. All this and more I have been obliged to comply with, that the country fellows might not say my lady is proud and above them.

BESIDES, there is not a woman creature within twenty miles of the place that is fit company for my housekeeper, and yet I must be intimate with them all. Lady *B*—indeed is very near us; but though we are very well acquainted in town, we must not be seen to speak to each other here, because her lord is in the opposition. Poor *Thomas* got a sad drubbing at her house, when I innocently sent him at my first coming into the country with a how d'ye to her ladyship. The greatest female acquaintance I have here are Mrs. Mayores, a tailor's wife, and Mrs. Alderman *Gascoyne* who sells pins and needles on one side of the shop, while her husband works at his pestle and mortar on the other. These ordinary wretches are constant attendants on my tea-table; I am obliged to take them and their brats out an airing in my coach every evening; and am afterwards often doomed to sit down to whiff and swabbers, or one and thirty bone-ace

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for farthings. Mrs. Mayorefs is a very violent party woman; and ſhe has two pug-dogs, one of which ſhe calls Sir *John* and the other Colonel, in compliment you muſt know to my huſband and his brother candidate.

WE had a ball the other day; and I opened it with Sir *Humbrey Chafe*, who danced in his boots, and hobbled along for all the world like the dancing bears which I have ſeen in the ſtreets at *London*. A terrible miſtake happened about precedence, which I fear will loſe Sir *John* a good many votes: an attorney's wife was very angry that her daughter, who is a little pert chit juſt come from the boarding-school, was not called out to dance before Miſs *Norton* the brewer's daughter, when every body knew, ſhe ſaid, that her girl was a gentlewoman bred and born.

I wiſh, my dear, you were to ſee my dreſſing-room; you would think it was a ribband-ſhop. *Lettice* and I have been buſy all this week in making up knots and favours, and yeſterday no milliner's prentice could work harder than I did in tying them on to the ſweaty hats of country bumpkins. And is not it very hard upon me? I muſt not even dreſs as I pleaſe; but am obliged to wear blue, though you know it does not ſuit my complexion, and makes me look as horrid as the witches in *Macbeth*.

BUT what is worſe than all, Sir *John* tells me the election expences have run ſo high that he muſt ſhorten my allowance of pin-money. He talks of turning off half his ſervants; nay, he has even hinted to me that I ſhall not come to town all the winter. Barbarous creature! but if he dares ſerve me ſo, he ſhall poſitively loſe his election next time; I will raiſe ſuch a ſpirit of oppoſition in all the wives and daughters in the county againſt him.

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YOU see, my dear, what a miserable life I have led ever since I have been banished into this odious country. I wish I had married an earl or a duke, and then I should not have been plagued with this fuss about elections. I don't know why Sir *John* should be so desirous to be chosen; for I don't find a parliament man's lady a bit more respected among the polite world. You will excuse my employing *Lettice* to write this, while I dictated: as the girl was a parson's daughter, she has a good education, and can spell tolerably well: and really my eyes are so bad, (from not being able to sleep at nights on account of my going to bed so horrid soon,) that that I can hardly see to subscribe myself

May 8th, 1754.

Your affectionate friend, &c.

Pray send me all the town news.

THIS lady's case, as related above, is indeed a very distressful one; but as Sir *John* has had the good luck to gain his point after a strong opposition, he will doubtless be sensible of the great share his lady had in his success. For my own part, when I consider the vast influence which the fair sex must naturally have over my fellow countrymen, I cannot help looking on their interesting themselves in these matters as a very serious affair. What success must a fine lady meet with on her canvass! No gentleman to be sure could be so rude or so cruel as to refuse such a pretty beggar any thing she could ask; and an honest country farmer, who could withstand any other arguments, might be coaxed and wheedled, or bribed with a smile, into voting against his conscience. Many instances have been found during the late election, of husbands who have been forced to poll as their wives would have them; and I know a young fellow that was brought over to give a vote against his inclination

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by his sweetheart, who refused to receive his addresses if he did not change his party.

It may not perhaps be too bold an assertion, that half the members in the present parliament owe their seats to the direct or indirect influence of the other sex: It would therefore be highly proper for the legislature to provide against this evil for the future, and I hope shortly to see among the Votes the following Resolution.

Resolved,

THAT it is an high Infringement of the Liberties and Privileges of the Commons of *Great Britain*, for any Peerefs, or any other Lady, to concern themselves in the Elections of Members to serve for the Commons in Parliament.

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We can make no use of the Letter sign'd Tiny Tittle, but shall always be glad to hear from that Correspondent.